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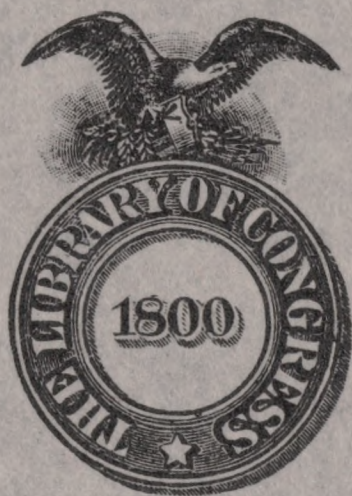
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# A D D R E S S

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

SOCIETY OF THE OLDEST INHABITANTS

OF WASHINGTON CITY,

ON WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY, FEBRUARY, 1874.

BY J. GOLDSBOROUGH BRUFF.

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OF WASHINGTON CITY,

ON WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY, FEBRUARY, 1874.

BY J. <sup>Joseph</sup> GOLDSBOROUGH BRUFF.

With Compliments

to

Mr Spofford

Congress. Librarian

WASHINGTON, D. C.

1874.

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## A D D R E S S .

—o—

MY BRETHREN :

On previous anniversaries of the day, you have listened to eloquent eulogiums by talented orators, but on the present occasion, one unversed in oratory and ungifted with the talent of eloquence, has the honor of offering an address, the tenor of which constitutes an all-sufficient eulogium on him whose memory we delight to revere.

It is an unpretentious, brief and cursive review of the most important incidents of his extraordinary life, and the great events of the Revolutionary struggle that marked his arduous, determined and brilliant march of eight years to the triumph. All of which, we know, were indelibly inscribed upon the enduring tablets of Fame, and duly recorded upon the brightest pages of History; yet may they not be occasionally recounted with satisfaction and advantage?

None can question the appropriateness; it is interesting to many, may even prove instructive to some; and ought to serve as a rebuke to a few others, who in the enjoyment of all the prerogatives of American citizens, bequeathed to us by Washington's patriotic valor, are in the habit of referring to him in terms of disrespectful levity; and I have known those so recreant as to insinuate that he had been influenced by selfish motives in some transaction. Whether such persons acted from ignorance, degeneracy or an incapability of appreciating true greatness, or the inestimable value of Washington's services, it matters not; the records of his unsullied noble life; of every transaction, public and private; his self sacrificing, devoted patriotism, all so well authenticated, stamp the imputation with the brand of unprincipled falsity. After the arduous struggle was over, when he had delivered his country, and established her prosperously among the nations of the earth, free, sovereign and independent: to decline accepting his compensation as Commander-in-chief, and after his services as Chief Magistrate, when on the eve of retiring to private life, to decline the liberal offering of his grateful appreciating country—and of a similar proffer by his native State—how could such nobility of character, stoop to petty selfishness? The idea is as preposterous as base.

The memorials of such a life ought to be occasionally reviewed, that they may not slumber in the dust of the Archives.

There was a very commendable custom prevalent in the Heroic ages, of the bards, recounting in strains of patriotic fervor, the noble virtues and achievements of their ancestors at periodical assemblages, and thereby perpetuated them, while reflecting those admirable qualities and illustrious performances for the emulation of the uprising generation.



Washington's superior characteristics were manifested in childhood, rapidly developed in youth, and nobly matured in manhood; crowning his age with honors and immortal fame, and blessing him with the gratifying consolation of having achieved his country's Independence, and of knowing her to be an established Republic.

He never evaded a responsibility, nor hesitated to perform a known duty, however beset with difficulties, and naught but the impracticability ever prevented him from the accomplishment, for a superior judgement determined and a conscious rectitude of purpose sustained him. The results established the wisdom of his mind and action, and his grateful country appreciated and approved of them. His whole character may be summed up as one of such moral sublimity as to have no historic counterpart.

His greatness was not of that severe, ambitious and remorseless character that obtained to so many renowned heroes of the Old World the historic title of *Great*, but vastly different, of a pre-eminent character, of a nobility conferred upon him by nature's God for the noblest purpose.

He was descended from an excellent lineage, and born on the ancestral estate, south bank of Bridge's Creek, nears its junction with the Potomac, Westmoreland County Virginia, seventy miles below Alexandria, February 22, 1732.

At a very early age he acquired as thorough an English and mathematical education as was attainable, to which he added a complete course of Military and Engineering sciences. Such were his attainments, from study and practice, that at the youthful age of 17 years, he was appointed the County Surveyor, and when a year older received his first military commission of Major, and with it the appointment of Adjutant General of the provinces. A short while after, his superior traits and genius were severely tested and well established. The encroachments of the French on the Ohio, demanded the serious attention of the Colonial Government, and the Governor of Virginia knew of none so well qualified as Washington to undertake the arduous, most perilous and delicate service, of proceeding to the Ohio, to ascertain the facts, and if necessary to demand an explanation. With a small party he successfully accomplished the task; for which he travelled more than five hundred miles, in midwinter, through a trackless wilderness, infested with wild beasts, and thronged with hordes of hostile savages; and had several encounters with the Indians.

In 1754 when he was 22 years of age, in response to an invitation, he attended a council of Provincial Governors and other officers, held at the headquarters of General Braddock, in Alexandria Va., relative to the expedition then being organized against Fort Duquesne, on the Ohio, where now is the city of Pittsburgh, Pa., and Braddock commissioned him Lieutenant Colonel and appointed him on his staff. On leaving Alexandria, the army ascended the Potomac, landed upon a rock, at the foot of the hill now crowned by the



National Observatory, and encamped on that hill, until it marched, by a mere trail, to Fredericktown, Md., where Washington joined it. Awaiting horses and wagons, it was detained there till June, '55, and a council of war adopted the order of march he had recommended. With that exception, the testy old commander disdained to profit by the experience and judgment of his youthful aid, and most unfortunately for the command and for himself, declined the services of one hundred Indian scouts and a competent guide. Braddock was a brave, experienced and distinguished officer, but like the regulars he commanded, was unacquainted with Indian warfare. He was proud, conceited, petulant and stubborn, and relied entirely upon his own military experience and the prowess of his troops.

The force consisted of 2000 men, and except a few Virginia riflemen, were British regular troops, accompanied by some light and heavy guns, 150 supply wagons and a heavy baggage train.

Washington was attacked with a violent fever on the 14th, compelling him to ride in a covered wagon in the rear until the 8th of June, when by a very painful effort, he rejoined the van, and on the next morning, though exceedingly feeble, he mounted, and attended his commander at the front. Early on that morning, the column had crossed and recrossed the Monongahela, several times in admirable order, and when advanced to a spot on the north bank about ten miles below the French Fort, in a dense portion of the forest, where the path was cut up by ravines, it was suddenly fired upon from the front and right, thrown into the wildest confusion and consternation, and over one half of the command, killed and wounded. In a few minutes Braddock had five horses killed under him and fell mortally wounded in attempting to mount the sixth. Washington had two horses killed under him, and his clothing riddled with rifle balls.

For awhile it must have been a very pandemonium of horrors, resounding through that wilderness—the thrilling war-hoop of the merciless savages, the shouts of combatants, unremitting fusilade, cries and groans of the wounded and dying, and uproar of the confused masses, commingled with wagons, horses and artillery; and amid that direful scene was the youthful Washington, self-possessed and undismayed; as if possessed of superhuman powers, he extricated the terror stricken soldiery and brought them off, together with his dying commander; from the sanguinary ambushade. The disaster would have been much more calamitous, but for the services of the intrepid Virginians, who promptly at the outset flew to shelter and combatted the foe in their own way, and perhaps prevented pursuit.

If evidence was necessary to prove Washington's protection by divine providence in that affair, it was given some 15 years after by an Indian Sachem, who called upon him at a time when he was engaged in surveying wild lands in the same district of country; for the purpose of doing him homage, as one



under the guardianship of the Great Spirit, and related that he commanded the savage allies of the French at the ambushade; there noticing Washington particularly, he repeatedly discharged his hitherto uneering rifle at him in vain; determined if possible to bring him down, he directed the attention of some of his expert young warriors, commanding them to endeavor to do that which most unaccountably he failed to accomplish, and they, likewise, repeatedly discharged their rifles at him also in vain. It was those futile attempts on his life that perforated his clothing. The natural conclusion of the savages was just.

When Washington returned to Virginia, the Assembly bestowed on him and the other surviving Virginians liberal grants of land, and the Governor conferred upon him the appointment of Commander-in-chief of the provincial army.

Some little while after this, on account of his authority being disputed by the Governor of Maryland, he proceeded to Boston, in mid-winter, a distance of five hundred miles and obtained the favorable decision of the Commander-in-chief of the Provinces. At that season of the year the highways were in a wretched state, and correspondence by mail most uncertain and unreliable. Some idea may be conceived of the difficulties of such travel then, from a notice published in the "Pennsylvania Gazette," a short time previous, by the Postmaster General of the Provinces, stating that as trade had suffered much embarrassment by the mails going only semi-monthly in winter, between Philadelphia and Boston, he had so arranged it that thereafter they would be transmitted weekly, and thus enable correspondents to receive replies in three weeks instead of six, as formerly.

Still suffering from the effects of the fever, Washington required repose for recuperation, and also relaxation from the cares of public service, but the demand on his abilities denied him the much needed privilege, except for very brief periods. He planned, and personally superintended the construction of a chain of forts on the western frontier, in a wilderness country invested by savages.

One of Washington's most esteemed friends, aid and military secretary, to the close of the Revolutionary War, was Colonel David Humphreys, of Connecticut, (who early entered the Continental army as a captain), he was bearer of the colors captured at Yorktown to Congress, and awarded an elegant sword for gallant services. He received the melancholy news of Washington's death at Madrid, being our Minister at that court and was most deeply affected for some time. When recovered, he composed an admirable poem on the death of that great and good man, and in it recounted the principal incidents of his life, and well described his character, abilities and attributes. He sent a copy of it to the widow of Mount Vernon.

Those early incidents of Washington's life are so well given in that poem that I may well quote them here:—



“Who has not heard, when round our border far,  
 Encroachments wak'd the Colonies to war,  
 He led a band, where band ne'er marched before,  
 And dy'd his maiden steel in savage gore?

\* \* \* \* \*

“Or, how, when Braddock fell—tho' hedged by foes,  
 And weak with sickness, watching, want of food,  
 And midnight wand'ring in the howling wood—  
 He hew'd a glorious passage—bold, discreet—  
 And saved an army by a sage retreat?  
 So thro' misfortune's path, the stripling far'd,  
 For other fields, by early feats prepar'd;  
 Thus rose the youthful hero's glory, soon  
 To blaze and brighten in perennial noon,  
 High o'er each earth-born mist, that frequent shrouds  
 Meridian glory in a night of clouds!”

The year 1758, was particularly noted by Washington's marriage, and taking full possession of Mount Vernon; having a command in the celebrated Forbe's expedition for the capture of Fort Duquense, which met with the severe disaster, which Washington had predicted, from the character of its organization. He became a member of the House of Burgesses, and continued therein, till the noble sentiments of his soul caused him to change his allegiance at the outbreak of the Revolutionary struggle. In September, 1774, he was appointed a Delegate to the Provisional Congress at Philadelphia, and in June of 1775, Congress appointed him Commander-in-chief of the Armies of the United Colonies, with a General's commission. On receiving it, he promptly proceeded to Cambridge, Mass., assumed command of the patriotic yeomanry, gathered there, who resembled more a mob, from their heterogenous characteristics, than soldiery, to compose an army on which so much depended, and to operate against such superior antagonists. Yet, of these, Washington organized the first army of the American Republic, and with it, so skillfully and effectively invested the city of Boston, as to compel its surrender on the 15th of March, 1776.

On the 4th of July, the Declaration of American Independence was proclaimed. On the 9th it was read at the head of every brigade and post, in and about Boston, by order of General Washington. Immediately after its reading, a mob chiefly composed of New Yorkers, demolished an equestrian statue of George III, made of lead, and converted the metal into bullets, for a much more important purpose.

Washington proceeded to New York.

General Lord Howe had arrived in New York harbor with reinforcements, and their army on Long Island was greatly augmented: all superior troops, well supplied and appointed, and commanded by their best officers. Our army was greatly inferior in numbers, and vastly inferior in discipline and necessary supplies. The enemy outmaneuvered and outflanked the Americans, and in the battle of Long Island, completely routed them. In his endeavors to rally the



army, Washington in the most reckless manner, exposed himself in front of the advancing enemy, defying their volleys of musketry. The Americans were without cavalry, and lost more than 1,000 men, and at length driven behind their earth works, the enemy closed around, and commenced entrenching. When the English were reinforced, previous to the battle, Washington issued an order to his troops, appealing to their courage and patriotism, in support of the cause, now at stake. It was a momentous exigency. In the order he said "the time is near at hand, which must determine whether Americans are to be Freemen or Slaves!" and "The fate of unborn millions will now depend, under God, on the courage and conduct of the Army!" But the superiority of the enemy was irresistible, and he now exultingly awaited the dawn of the next day to overpower the Americans, and strike a death-blow to their cause! It was on the night of the 29th of August, when Washington called a council of war, decided, and so cautiously effected a retreat, that the enemy dreamed not of the movement, brought off all stores, baggage and artillery, crossed the East River, and fortified on Harlem Heights. He was the last man, in the last boat, to leave Long Island.

The battle of White Plains followed, and other reverses; New York had to be evacuated, and then it was that Washington led the "forlorn hope" of his country, before a numerous and elate enemy, in a masterly retreat through New Jersey. The enemy's march was characterized by plunder, rapine and violence, sparing neither age nor sex. It finally had the effect, however, to rally the people around the American standard. Washington crossed the Delaware, and the army went into winter quarters. It was destitute and moody, but their noble Chieftain, ever on the alert, to enspirit them and serve the cause, projected an enterprise that had a very elating effect. On the evening of the 25th of December, he embarked the men, with a few light pieces of cannon, and a passage was forced through the ice, across the Delaware. The cold was intense; two soldiers froze to death, and it was near morning before marching orders could be attained. Pushing on, they fell upon the enemy at Trenton, with such impetuosity, and so unexpectedly, as to gain a complete victory. The details of that brilliant affair, are so well recited in a Revolutionary song, of the time, and was such a favorite ditty with the patriots, that is well worth a place here:—

#### CROSSING THE DELAWARE.

—∞—  
 " On Christmas Day, of Seventy-Six,  
 Our ragged troops, with bay'nets fix't,  
 To Trenton march'd away.  
 The Delaware ice, the boats below,  
 The sky o'ercast with hail and snow;  
 But no signs of dismay!  
 Our object was that Hessian band,



That dar'd to invade fair Freedom's land,  
 And quarter in the place.  
 Brave Washington, he led us on,  
 His ensign streaming with renown,  
 That ne'er had known disgrace!  
 In silent march we pass'd the night,  
 Each soldier panting for the fight,  
 Tho' quite benumbed with frost!  
 Green, on the right, at six began,  
 The left was led by Sullivan—  
 Who, in battle, no time lost—  
 Their pickets storm'd, the alarm was spread  
 That rebels, risen from the dead,  
 Were marching on the town!  
 Some scampered here, some scampered there;  
 And some, for battle, did prepare,  
 But soon their arms laid down!  
 Five hundred servile miscreants,  
 With all their colors, baggage, tents,  
 Were trophies of the day!  
 The battle o'er, the bright canteen,  
 In centre, front, and rear was seen,  
 Driving fatigue away!  
 Now, brethren, of that band, let's sing,  
 Our safe deliverance from a King,  
 Who wish't to rule the sway;  
 And, as life you know, is but a span,  
 Let's touch the tankard, while we can,  
 In mem'ry of that day!"

The army being reinforced with new levies, and some supplies obtained, it became a matter of grave policy to make some energetic demonstrations; and on the 3d of January, 1777, Washington attacked the enemy at Princeton. The battle was hotly contested for thirty-six hours—Washington nearly all that time in the saddle. The result was long doubtful, and Washington exposed himself several times most undauntedly, rallying his men against superior forces and discipline. The crisis had arrived; the Americans were recoiled by a murderous fire; Washington seized their standard, and galloping to the front in the hurricane of lead, rallied them on to a complete victory.

Those bold, judicious and unexpected attacks at Trenton and Princeton revived the drooping spirits of the patriots, renewed their faith in the cause, and their confidence in the abilities of their devoted, heroic commander.

La Fayette now became a battle companion of Washington.

Next, was the battle of Brandywine, stubbornly fought; but the odds was too great; we were compelled to retire. Washington's intrepidity was such, in this engagement, that his officers had fairly to force him from the field. Our army was greatly reduced in force and supplies, while that of the



enemy was vastly augmented, well appointed and supplied. Theirs was elate, and ours the reverse. Philadelphia was abandoned. On the 25th September Congress and all the government stores were removed to Lancaster, Penn. There Congress re-assembled on the 27th.

Still determined to strike for freedom at every opportunity, Washington attacked the enemy at Germantown on the 4th of October; but it was unsuccessful; attributable to defective discipline, weakness and blunders. Our army retired to winter quarters at Valley Forge, and remained there till June. A term of the deepest gloom to every patriot. Here destitution, sickness and sufferings prevailed. The troops were actually some days entirely destitute of rations; desertions large and constant; 500 horses perished in less than three months from starvation and exposure. Washington, with La Fayette, visited the troops and endeavored to console them—to hope for speedy relief and the final triumph of our cause. He appealed to Congress in the strongest terms for assistance. At length, supplies and recruits were obtained. On the opening of the campaign of 1778 the American army, such as it was, numbered but 15,000 men, while that of the adjacent enemy, consisted of 33,000 well supplied, effective troops.

Washington kept up a complete system of patrols, scouts and foragers. Their vigilance and energy annoyed and crippled the enemy's resources, broke up his communications, and thus reduced his stores to such an extent, that he was necessitated to leave Philadelphia. As their advance columns were retiring, Washington dispatched La Fayette, with 2,000 men, and 6 light guns, to harass him. General Howe then sent General Grant, with 6,000 picked men, from Philadelphia to intercept him, but by adroit manoeuvring, La Fayette eluded him, and he returned disappointed. Howe, in disgust, resigned, and Clinton assumed command of the enemy's forces. Before their rear-guard had cleared the streets of Philadelphia on one side the American advance entered it on the other.

Washington was most anxious to attack the retiring foe; but a council of war objected, when Washington determined to assume the responsibility, and strike early; on the morning of June 28th, the attack was made at Monmouth. The battle raged all day with varying success, and doubtful determination, till our persistent patriots prevailed; the enemy retreated in haste, and were pursued by our cavalry, nearly down to their boats. Their loss was nearly 2,000 men, killed, wounded, prisoners, etc. It was an unusually sultry season: the drought dried up the waters and withered vegetation, and the country was inundated with dust. Washington's aid, the poet-warrior, Humphreys, in his poem already quoted from at the commencement, being a participant in that great battle, and an eye witness to what he so graphically describes, I quote the passage:



"Thou, Monmouth, witness, thro' thy waste of sand,  
 The battle bravely fought, as wisely plann'd.  
 The sick'ning harvest fail'd, in summer's pride,  
 The gaping ground, for lack of moisture, dried;  
 The foliage scorch'd, the grass untimely sear'd,  
 And dry dun, the late green sward appear'd.  
 When now, from Schuykill's shore, in strong array,  
 The royal host, thro' Jersey, wend their way;  
 Full many a weary league, with weary steps, retreat  
 Thro' suffocating dust, and drought, and heat.  
 Columbia roused to intercept their flight,  
 Hang on their rear-guard, like the storm of night!  
 The dubious dawn, on Monmouth's plain, that shone,  
 Crimson'd the clouds, before the rising sun;  
 Where Britain's cavalry, in dreadful length,  
 Stood, sword in hand, a living wall of strength!  
 Simcoe's videttes, by glimm'ring embers move,  
 Like phantom-forms, in some enchanted grove:  
 Whilst scatter'd far, at first approach of morn,  
 Tarleton's light scouts now blew the bugle-horn.  
 Meanwhile, our troops, observant of their plan,  
 Sounded the matin-trump along the van.  
 Straight, at the sound, upsprang, with nimble speed,  
 The ready rider, on the ready steed,  
 No loath'd delay, no hateful halt occurs,  
 Wheel'd to the charge, with all the speed of spurs!  
 Red rose the sun, and sabres bluely bright  
 Leap'd from their scabbard on his sanguine light;  
 With speed electric rush'd the rapid band,  
 And clatt'ring hoofs uphurl'd the eddy sand;  
 Then wrap'd in dust and smoke the fight began,  
 Steed, furious, springs on steed, and man on man!"

\* \* \* \* \*

"Here leads great Washington Columbia's band,  
 The brand of battle blazing in his hand,  
 Darts his experienc'd eye along the files,  
 And o'er the subject-scene, superior smiles,  
 In front of British Clinton's vet'ran form,  
 Dark as the night, and low'ring as the storm:  
 With glory gain'd in former wars elate,  
 His voice the tempest's and his falchion fate!"

\* \* \* \* \*

"The battles fate, long undecided lay,  
 And deeds, immortal, grac'd the doubtful day!"

\* \* \* \* \*

"With placid smile, and animating voice,  
 That made the wearied warrior's soul rejoice,  
 He came conspicuous to his own side far,  
 And breath'd fresh vigor thro' the broken war:  
 Columbia rallying round his godlike form,  
 Swept o'er the dry sand like a mountain storm;  
 Such prowess shedding thro' his new-rais'd host,  
 As not the foe's long discipline could boast!"



The time had arrived when our most fortunate alliance with France, was productive of important advantages, of which may be mentioned our obtaining a few war vessels, and thereby, some success on the ocean.

In 1778, the army winter-quartered at Middlebrook. This was a critical time that tried Washington's soul; aggrieved because of the country's embarrassments, consequent upon dissension in Congress, produced by party demagogues, who had been elected in the place of proper statesmen and honest patriots. However, he checked the advance of Clinton, in the State of New York; and planned the attack on Stony Point, so triumphantly accomplished. 1779, army winter-quartered at Morristown.

1780, particularly noted for Arnold's treason, and Andre's execution.

In 1781 The enemy plundered and burnt Norfolk and some other places in the Chesapeake Bay, and fortified York-Town.

September 2d and 3d the allied forces under Washington and La Fayette passed through Philadelphia en route for Virginia: on the 30th. they invested and besieged York-Town, and on the 19th October, it was surrendered to them.

1782, the final evacuation of New York by the enemy and reoccupation by our forces. 1783, April 19th, exactly eight years after the affair at Lexington, Washington announced to the Army at Newburgh the Declaration of Peace, and on the 23d December he surrendered his commission to Congress at Annapolis.

Congress desired to grant him a liberal donation, but he declined the offering. The state of Virginia also actuated by a grateful appreciation of his inestimable services, also proffered him a handsome offering, which he likewise declined. In 1784, he bade La Fayette farewell at Mount Vernon.

1787, was President of the convention that formed the new Constitution of the United States: and in 1789 was elected first President of the United States. In 1792 was re-elected and declined to serve another term.

1793, he established our system of neutrality: in '94 he suppressed an insurrection in Pennsylvania, and in 1796 he delivered his Farewell Address to the citizens of the United States, and soon after retired to private life at Mount Vernon.

Apprehending a rupture with France, Congress appointed him Lieut. General and commander-in-chief of the Army of the United States.

At Mount Vernon he paid particular attention to agricultural pursuits, and corresponded much on the subject. Much of his time was however devoted to the entertainment of friends and visitors, dispensing charities &c., but paramount to all other matters, important subject of a national character in any way relating to the prosperity and happiness of his country, claimed his considerate attention, and consequently, he continued to correspond with Congress and Officers of government. Having caught cold on his farm, which produced a malignant throat disease: terminating his noble existence, for a nobler one,



in Eternity, between the hours of 10 and 11 p.m. on the 12th of December, 1799 : leaving his bereaved Country in deepest sorrow and mourning. Envy cannot dim nor obscure the glory of his fame, it will shine with undiminished radiance long after those of less repute are forgotten!

Humphrey's poem thus eloquently mentions his character and attributes :

"Yes earth shall know, what arm the strife maintain'd,  
And who the palm of Independence gain'd.  
T'was that blest meed, to Washington so dear,  
Sustain'd his efforts thro' the dread career!  
Shall I, who knew the secrets of his soul,  
His smother'd anguish, e're he reach'd the goal;  
When faint with sickness, visited by Heav'n,  
His feeble band before the foe was driven.  
Their snow-tracks stain'd with blood, their limbs by frost  
Benumb'd, defeated, all but honer lost,  
When scarcely hope sustain'd the chilling blast,  
And ev'ry hour of Freedom seem'd the last;  
Shall I not tell, how firm he met the shock,  
His breast impassable as diamond rock?"

\* \* \* \* \*

"The tricks of state his soul indignant scorn'd;  
Hence candid policy his sway adorn'd.  
Faith, Honer, Justice, Honesty, his aim,  
And Truth and Washington, were but one name!"

\* \* \* \* \*

"Say, daz'ling conq'ers! who as comets glar'd,  
How mean your splendor, when to his compar'd!"

His physical and mental characteristics combined to give him a noble individuality, pre-eminently his own; of a stature considerably superior to the ordinary standard, and with faultless proportions; of the most courteous and dignified mien; firmness, decision, and benevolence marked his countenance.

None ever beheld to forget him: for the recollection became indelibly stamped on the mind, the tablet of memory ever retained it, like the impress one cherishes of some rare and exquisite gem!

The peculiar individuality of Washington's likeness is very remarkable, in the fact, that any representation, no matter how rude it may be, if generally correct in delineation, is immediately recognized as of him, by the meekest child!

I have had the pleasure of knowing those who had the satisfaction of seeing Washington, and also of one who had visited him at Mount Vernon.

Washington's high mission was well fulfilled, and he left to us, a firmly established Republic: a confederacy of 13 states on the Atlantic border; having an average breadth of 320 miles, a length of 1500, an area of 321,074 square miles, and with a population of 3,928,827 souls.

Behold how it has grown! that original stock of the Tree of Liberty has flourishingly spread out, like the Banyan Tree of the Indies, to the proportions of an immense forest. A Union of 48 States and Territories, spanning the Continent from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, and extending from the



Gulf coast to the British possessions and the Polar sea, having an area of 3,472,000 square miles, and a population of 50,000,000 of free citizens, and its starry banner floats upon every sea, and is commercially borne to every port upon the globe. As a poet predicted more than half a century ago:

“Thy fleets to all regions thy pow’r shall display,  
The nations to admire and the ocean obey;  
Each shore to thy glory its tribute unfold,  
And the east and the South yield their spices and Gold!”

But the ultimate destiny of the Republic can only be determined by the wisdom or the folly of its citizens, as represented by their legislators and their rulers. Yet one thing is certain, that in proportion to their departure from our great Magna Charta, the Constitution, so will the stability of the structure be impaired.

We must however hope and pray that true wisdom will prevail, and that even its future prosperity and growth may equal that which has already been accomplished, so that eventually its citizens can emphatically exclaim:

“No pent up Utica confines our powers,  
The whole, the boundless Continent is ours!”

All history informs us, and their mouldering relics testify, that many nations, great and powerful, once prosperous, and endowed with all that ought to constitute and perpetuate their greatness, and some of whom endured for ages, yet decayed and passed away. Their rulers fell from their pinnacle of fame, like ærolite’s to sink into the dust and commingle with it, leaving no trace of their brilliant origin. They were unwise, and paid the inevitable penalty.

All nations of the earth, from time immemorial up to the present, have, however, left memorials, and many that have survived even the detritus of the empires that erected them, of man’s appreciation of man’s greatness, a natural, ever existing principle of the human soul, inferior only to that of reverence to the Deity, the sentiment of admiration and gratitude for the noble, the great and the good. And those commemorative memorials are to be seen in every country, *every where*! Where is ours to Washington?

From the tenor of my address, another subject demands attention to complete it. An Account of this Territory, and this City, founded by Washington, and named in honor of him, by his grateful appreciating country.

As of every other subject of national importance, that of a site, on which to locate the Federal Capital, claimed the patriotic consideration and forethought of the illustrious statesman. He was impressed with the peculiar adaptability of this spot for the purpose, after a preliminary survey of it, before the subject claimed Congressional action.

His superior judgement perceived, and Congress confirmed it, that the position chosen, must combine certain characteristics;—the Metropolis to be founded upon it, and the general government to maintain exclusive, uninterrupted jurisdiction over all. The cities on the seaboard, or very close to it, might



not prove secure from foreign invasion, and all existing cities and towns, and such as might be built by trade and commerce, would be as liable to popular commotions and disturbances as Philadelphia had been. The position then, to be secured, must obviate those disadvantages, be conveniently near the seaboard, yet so far from it, with the proper natural features, to be rendered perfectly secure from foreign invasion, and where might be concentrated every line of communication by land and water with all the country. All those desirable characteristics are possessed by this District beyond question. Besides the foregoing, it possesses climate advantages of considerable importance. It is most sulubrious, and must be considered temperate, for the occasional spells of extremes are usually of brief duration. And none of the tempests that sweep over the union ever strike this little section of country with full force, as if in deference to its honored name, his selection, and the proximity of his revered shrine!

The site of this City had the primitive name of Conogcheague, presumed to have been the name of a band of the Anacostias who lived here. When added to the government, it was in the occupancy of a number of settlers, imployed in the culture of tobacco, corn &c., living chiefly in two hamlets, east and west, called Carrolsburg and Hamburg, and had only three or four principal owners. Maryland ceded her portion to the Federal government December 23d, 1788. and Virginia her part December 3d, 1789. Congress enacted it to be the temporary and permanent seat of the Federal government, after the year 1800. July 16th, 1790. Washington's proclamation for its survey January 24th 1791. The corner-stone of the Territory was laid at Jones' Point, Alexandria, with masonic ceremonies, April 15th, 1791.

The plan of the city was devised and prepared by Mayor L'Enfant, a French Engineer, under Washington's directions, the latter determining the sites of the Capitol and President's house, and many of the principal features. Major L'Enfant also prepared the map of the Territory for the Commissioners of survey, and when they presented their report to Congress, accompanied by the drawings, it contained the recommendations that the territory be termed "the Territory of Columbia", and the City be named: "the City of Washington", in honor of the great Chief and in deference to his services in the premises, unanimously adopted: December 15th, 1791.

The construction of the President's house was commenced 13th October, 1792, the architect was James Hoban, and the corner-stone of the Capitol was laid with Masonic, Military and Civic ceremonies, 18th September, 1793, its successive architect's being Hallet, Hadfield, Hoban and Latrobe. Prior to December 1791, the city was called "the Federal City", so addressed, is a letter, I possess, to my mother. In 1800 the government was removed here from Philadelphia. Congress assumed jurisdiction over the Territory Feb. 27th, 1801.



The superintendency of the city was vested in three Commissioners. appointed by the President till 1802. The city was incorporated by Congress May 3d, 1802. The Federal government exercised authority over the streets and plans, and the President appointed the Mayors till the 15th of May, 1820, when a new charter required a popular election. The appointed Mayors served gratuitously. The first Mayor was Robert Brent, an uncle of our honored secretary, and the Mayor of 1812 was the father of our honored President, Dr. Blake.

Washington was so confident of the permanency of the Metropolis here, that he purchased several lots on the north side of the Capitol Hill, and had built there, a couple of commodious and substantial residences, which have recently been renovated and improved. It is said, that Gen. Washington had apartments prepared in the southern one for his occasional use. These were probably constructed about the year 1795, and may have served for the offices of the Architect's and Clerk's, employed upon the Capitol building.

No trade nor manufactures, and the frequent discussions of removal of the seat of government had a depressing effect upon the growth of the City, and for many years it remained unworthy of the Nation's Capitol, and had conferred upon it, the very applicable soubriquet of "the City of Magnificent distances" I recollect very well, 30 years ago, that city, when the northern portion, from near the line of K street, out to the thickly timbered hills bounding it, was of a most rustic character, extensive old fields, marshes and briery jungles called *slashes*, interspersed the landscape. It was diversified with many meandering branches, innumerable ditches, cornfields, garden-farms, barns, scattered houses and log cabins with their accompaniments of hog-pens, post and rail and worm fences, ignoring all theoretical lines of Streets, Avenues and Reservations. And another interesting feature of the Washington of "Auld Lang Syne", was the boundary-stones over the aforesaid portion, and south of the Avenue, in places set up by the surveyor's when the plan was laid off to indicate the corners of streets &c. I recollect those old grey stones, marked with the initials of the streets, and numbers of squares, well. When a boy I often leaped over them in glee, and in youth rested upon them after the fatigue of rabbit-hunting in the slashes. Twenty-eight years ago, a friend of mine purchased more than a square of ground on a street-road, northern portion of the city, for a few cents per square foot; I joked him about the ridiculous investment, it is now worth dollars per foot, on a splendid street. The school-houses were chiefly miserable edifices, some even stables, remodeled for the purpose, and the market-houses were mere sheds.

The population of the city in 1800, was 8,144 souls, now about 110,000. In 1800 the population of the entire Territory was 14,093 souls, now about 160,000, and were the other side restored, which ought to be, would make an entire population of about 176,000 souls,



In 1822 the total number of dwelling-houses in the city was 2,229, of which only 1,045 were of brick, the total number now is 18,500, a large proportion of them worthy of any city, a great many of a superior character, with many magnificent and palatial edifices.

The streets were slowly extended, ditched and gravelled and here and there buildings were added, the lines of Pennsylvania Avenue, 7th street and some few others chiefly improved, when the influx attracted to the National headquarters by the war, added considerably to the number of ordinary buildings but nothing in the way of street improvements, many remained unextended and ungraded, and with a most imperfect system of drainage, if system it could be called. But a new form of government in the past three years, has most advantageously revolutionized the entire plan, wonderfully changed the aspect of the City. Thanks to the "Board of Public Works", for what they have accomplished in such a short period, that which usually requires the slow progress of centuries to produce, has here been consummated in as many months. Its magnificent plan has been well developed, it has now a florid and robust constitution, with a beautiful and healthy complexion. The appreciable value of the improvements and a promising guarantee for its future are exhibited in the large real-estate investments, and number and character of costly buildings erected and constructing. But it is incomplete, much is required yet to perfect it, much more than any mere corporation can effect. To render it full, worthy of its honored name, worthy of the Nations Capitol, the just pride of all Americans, the most beautiful City on this Continent, and equal to any in the old world, it should be completed, for which it demands 'the proper consideration of the Government, that aid which is so justly due it by every sense of national interest and dignity and governmental propriety.

Here, near the shrine of him whose name it bears,  
The fairest city of the western world,  
Shall spread o'er hills and plains, gilt domes and spires shall rise,  
And freedom's banner ever be unfurl'd.



















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